



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 1

JOHN F. KENNEDY FEDERAL BUILDING
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02203-0001

Asper Sept 12
Casco Chem
Vitale
Filtek

September 3, 1997

Mr. Dominic Manzoli
775-A Cabot Street
Beverly, MA 01915

OFFICE OF THE
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR



SEMS DocID

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Dear Mr. Manzoli:

Thank you for your letter of August 11, 1997, concerning the Wenham Lake Reservoir Aquifer, an important source of drinking water for the Beverly-Salem area. In your letter, you expressed concern about potential contamination of Wenham Lake and its aquifer from activities associated with the Beverly Airport. In response to your concern, my staff has contacted the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MA DEP) and the Beverly Planning Department to determine the status of current activities affecting the water supply.

As you mentioned in your letter, past activities at the Beverly Airport have resulted in contamination. In the past, the airport was operated by the United States Army and was used as a missile site. Contamination of the area was investigated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and MA DEP in the late 1980's and early 1990's, and is now being handled by the MA DEP. To date, the MA DEP has identified four hazardous waste sites near the airport: 1) General Aviation site--MA DEP # 3-0230; 2) Casco Chemical Nike Missile site--MA DEP #3-0231; 3) Vitale Fly Ash site--MA DEP #3-0235; and 4) Filtek site. The fourth hazardous waste site, the Filtek site, has been remediated by Northeast Utilities and is expected to be de-listed as a hazardous waste site soon. Studies have been conducted for the remaining three hazardous waste sites since the late 1980's, but to date no comprehensive assessment of the contamination has been completed. Recognizing the need for a comprehensive investigation of the area, MA DEP is about to commission a consultant to complete a Phase I Study of the three remaining hazardous waste sites. The Phase I study will make use of historical information and supplement it with additional ground water, surface water and sediment monitoring and analysis. A copy of the draft plan to conduct a comprehensive study of the hazardous waste sites and a proposed public involvement process for the study will be released for public comment this fall. I encourage you to participate in this process. Plans for the study will not be finalized until all comments from the public have been addressed. Based on the results of the study, options for remediation of the sites will be identified. Fortunately, monitoring indicates these hazardous waste sites have not caused significant impairment of water quality at Wenham Lake. For further information about this study, please contact Mr. Jerry McCall at (617) 932-7600 x 7738. Mr. McCall is the MA DEP Site Manager for the Beverly Airport.

In your letter, you also expressed concern over plans to provide public sewerage service to the Beverly Airport. EPA's Region 1, New England Office provides funding for wastewater projects through its Clean Water State Revolving Fund. According to Alan Slater at MA DEP, there are

no current plans to federally fund extension of sewerage to the Beverly Airport through this program. As you have indicated in your letter, the Airport currently uses an old wastewater disposal system. The system was developed by the Army years ago. MA DEP has inspected the system twice in the past year and found the system to be operating satisfactorily. Nonetheless, given the age and size of the system and its proximity to a public drinking water supply, MA DEP has recommended the system be replaced by public sewerage.

You also mentioned your support for providing public sewerage to the airport, but expressed concern that current plans to extend sewerage along a new proposed airport connector road would encourage industrial development nearby the airport and Wenham Lake. According to Tina Cassidy, Beverly City Planner, the proposed road would serve a Restricted Industrial Research and Office zoning district. This district would provide for office complexes, light industrial parks, and necessary support facilities. Public sewerage is recommended for the district to lessen the potential impact of existing and future development upon water resources. While the district is located nearby Wenham Lake, a study by the Salem-Beverly Water Supply Board indicates the proposed road is just outside the watershed to Wenham Lake. Preliminary study suggests it is also not within the ground water recharge area to the lake. To protect Wenham Lake, the city has designated a Watershed Protection Overlay District. This district only allows conservation and low intensity development.

While the proposed airport connector road is not expected to directly impact Wenham Lake, there are wetlands issues to be addressed. MA DEP is currently acting on an appeal to the Local Order of Conditions issued by the Beverly Conservation Commission. Please contact Michael Turgeon, MA DEP wetlands program, at (617) 932-7788 for further information about the appeal. While the appeal process gives MA DEP the ability to minimize wetlands impacts from the road, MA DEP cannot mandate the nature of future land development in the area. Decisions about land development are made locally through a community's master planning process and zoning regulations. I encourage you to continue working with your city officials to provide environmental safeguards for future development.

I appreciate your commitment to protecting Wenham Lake and its aquifer. Please feel free to contact me or MaryJo Feuerbach, Office of Ecosystem Protection at (617) 565-4721 if you wish to discuss this information further.

Sincerely,



John P. DeVillars
Regional Administrator

cc. Jerry McCall, MA DEP
Mike Turgeon, MA DEP
Tom Knowlton, Superintendent, Salem-Beverly Water Supply Board
Jane Downing, EPA
Tina Cassidy, City of Beverly